Money Saving Tips From the Great Depression

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August 12, 2025

The Great Depression was one of the toughest times in United States history. Following a historic collapse of the stock market wages were low, and jobs were tough to find for just about everyone.

However, the saying goes “tough times make tough people”, and the Great Depression was no different. Families, friends, and communities banded together to support one another, and people got savvy with their savings and spending.

To write this article, I spent some time talking with my grandparents who grew up during the Great Depression. In chatting with them I learned some of the tools and tips that they and their families used to save money during this time of economic distress.

I thought it would be helpful to talk with real people who have experience in finding ways to make ends meet when things are tough. Hans-Hermann Hoppe Best Price: $1.99 Buy New $10.70 (as of 07:55 UTC - Details)

If we can use and learn from the experiences of those who came before us, then hopefully we are better prepared for the hard times that lay ahead of us.

Here are tips for saving money from real survivors of the Great Depression.

Live As A Family

While today’s world encourages young adults to move out as soon as possible, it isn’t the best way to save money.

During the Great Depression families stuck together, and moved together in search of work. Living under one roof cuts down the cost of rent, utilities, food, travel, and more.

By living as a family you can not only save money but have a trustworthy team around you to work through these hard times.

Insulate The Home

Homes today naturally come with some insulation, but the more you can insulate the better. Especially in the colder months of winter keeping the house heated can be challenging and expensive.

My grandmother talked about using whatever they had spare, whether it be clothes, blankets, pillows, etc. Whatever material they had spare was used to try and provide an extra bit of insulation. By adding extra insulation you can find valuable savings on your heating.

Wet Sheets Over Entryways In The Summer

On the other side of things, during the summers of the Great Depression, they would hang wet or damp sheets over the doors and windows.

The water would evaporate during the day and in doing so it would cool the air inside the home some.

The less strain you can put on your AC unit means less strain on your wallet.

Buy Produce That Is Close To Spoiling

One tip my grandparents learned that they still practice today is buying produce close to it's date of expiration. During the Depression, stores were closed on Sunday and the produce being sold would spoil in the upcoming following week.

As such, vendors would drop their prices on Saturday evenings in an attempt to offload all the produce before it went bad.

By purchasing produce on Saturday evenings their families were able to eat for much cheaper the following week.

Create Your Own Cleaning Supplies

Another tip for inside the home is to create your own cleaning supplies. With the adults in the family often taking on daily labor, my grandmother and the other children learned to take up the work around the home.

Rather than spending on costly household cleaners from the store, mixing hot water and vinegar can be highly effective for scrubbing away grime.

Consider Cheaper Protein Options

Much of the protein we consume today is either beef or chicken, but during the Great Depression, these types of protein became scarce and expensive. As a result, my grandfather talked about finding cheaper protein options like rabbit, eggs, and even squirrels on occasion.

As kids, one of the my grandfather's favorite meals was fried bologna because it was cheap and easy to make. Eating meals like these may not be ideal, but it was a way for them to keep an entire family fed on a budget.

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